United Nations S/2016/462

Security Council

Distr.: General
20 May 2016

Original: English

Letter dated 19 May 2016 from the Permanent Representatives of Angola and Spain to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

We have the honour to transmit the summary of the Arria Formula meeting of the Security Council on food security, nutrition and peace, held on 29 March 2016, and request that it be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ismael A. **Gaspar Martins**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Angola to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Román **Oyarzun Marchesi**
Ambassador
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Annex to the letter dated 19 May 2016 from the Permanent Representatives of Angola and Spain to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Security Council Arria Formula meeting on food security, nutrition and peace

29 March 2016

Summary

1. On March 2016, the Permanent Missions of Angola and Spain to the United Nations organized an Arria Formula meeting of the Security Council to discuss the links between food security, nutrition and peace.

2. The meeting was chaired by the Permanent Representative of Angola to the United Nations, Ismael Gaspar Martins, and the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations, Román Oyarzun Marchesi. The following presenters participated in the meeting: Mr. José Graziano da Silva, Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Professor of International Affairs at The New School and former economist for the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme; and Sarah Cliffe, Director of New York University's Center on International Cooperation.

3. The aim of the Arria Formula meeting was to discuss the interlinkages between food security and peace, including:

(a) The short-, medium- and long-term consequences of conflict on food security;

(b) How food security can contribute to the prevention of conflict while improving peace, stability and security;

(c) The importance of reflecting the concept of "food security" in coherent approaches to supporting international peace and security.

Key messages

4. Most participants highlighted the multidimensional and complex relationship between peace, conflict and food security. In doing so, they recalled the words of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which recognized that "there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development" (see General Assembly resolution 70/1).

5. Participants agreed with the presenters that conflict has strong and unambiguous adverse effects on food security and nutrition. It is the major driver of food insecurity and malnutrition, both acute and chronic. Conflict has lasting impacts on human development as a result of increased malnutrition, which tends to affect children the most and leave lifelong physical and/or mental handicaps.

6. They also stressed that access to food has been increasingly used in conflict situations as a deliberate tactic of war, expanding human suffering and violating international humanitarian law.

7. There was unanimous agreement that conflict directly affects food security and nutrition. This can happen through the disruption of food systems, the plundering of crops and livestock and the loss of assets and incomes, all of which directly or indirectly affect food access, with negative consequences, especially for women and children, and the breaching of international humanitarian law.

8. It was recognized that the links between food insecurity and conflict are non-linear and that, combined with other factors, food insecurity can be a source of social unrest and political instability that can lead to conflict. For example, food insecurity combined with a spike in food prices, a violation of human rights or the non-existence of decent job opportunities.

9. The food security dimension of human security was also discussed. Food insecurity can indirectly lead to conflict when citizens perceive that governments are unable to respond to their food needs, thus breaking the existing social contract. This underscores the role of national food security policies as conflict-prevention policies and as a necessary part of a coherent post-conflict peacebuilding strategy.

10. It was stressed that food insecurity does not automatically cause conflict and that some countries are more resilient than others. One factor that can prevent this negative link is the presence of strong national institutions that can fulfil a social compact with their citizens, quickly providing help to those affected by food insecurity, with or without international assistance.

11. Conversely, participants highlighted the contribution of food security and nutrition to preventing and alleviating conflict, and to rebuilding socially cohesive societies in post-conflict settings.

12. Improved food security can diminish the possibility that countries in post-conflict situations will relapse into conflict, as happens with 40 per cent of countries in post-conflict situations, most of which have high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition.

13. Various possible coordinated courses of action were considered, involving national, regional and international actors. These included:

(a) Conflict-sensitive approaches to reducing food insecurity, which take into consideration the specific triggers and root causes of the conflict;

(b) Pro-peace approaches to increase food security in fragile situations;

(c) Finding ways for peace operations to complement the restoration of food security and livelihoods, for example by ensuring that they protect agricultural production and local trade routes;

(d) Investing and focusing on the rehabilitation of agriculture and the adoption of more resilient food systems to improve food security and nutrition levels, including actions specifically aimed at empowering the most vulnerable groups, such as women and the youth;

(e) Investing in food security interventions to strengthen peace and stability;

(f) Developing scalable social protection programmes that can support citizens when food shocks occur, including cash transfer and cash-for-work programmes that have been successfully set up in Somalia and other conflict situations.

14. It was suggested that the Security Council be provided with updated and regular analysis of food insecurity status in countries in conflict to inform their debates and support their decision-making, through mechanisms such as the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification and the Global Information and Early Warning System produced by FAO, other agencies of the United Nations and other partners.

15. In reaffirming the importance of food security, nutrition, peace and development, some participants of the Arria Formula meeting identified ways to take this discussion forward within the frameworks of the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, the General Assembly and its main committees and the Economic and Social Council, as well as the World Humanitarian Summit.

16. There was widespread acknowledgment of the timeliness and relevance of this Arria Formula meeting in the current operating context. Food security, nutrition and peace should continue to feature prominently on global agendas and the international community should strengthen efforts to work together on this matter in a more integrated and complementary manner than it has done to date.